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ABSTRACT

The Cabell County (West Virginia) Public Schools Retail Training Program provides four types of on-site training for the employees of area businesses, whether product or service related. The program provides on-the-job training in entry-level, first-line supervisory and management positions as well as in entrepreneurship. The program's strong community orientation is illustrated by the fact that the program office and classroom is located in the management offices of the local shopping mall. The program does not have any one standard curriculum. Rather, materials, information, data, and packets are compiled from a variety of advisory persons, including business consultants, college professors, and other business professionals, and are developed into an instructional program based on the needs of the particular business participating in the workshop. This allows for continued updating of all materials. An articulation agreement between the county school system, Marshall University, and Marshall University Community College further enhances the variety of subjects and programs that can be offered. Examples of programs that have been offered under the auspices of the Retail Training Program range from a marketing intern program to workshops lasting from 2 to 16 hours. Accountability is based on course attendance, completion, job placement, and follow-up data. Follow-up is also achieved through interviews with those participating in the manager and supervisor workshops and their employees. (MN)

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ADULT EDUCATION OUTREACH PROGRAM

"TAKING IT TO THE STUDENTS"

Outline of Program Presentation
for
AAACE Conference '86

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TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

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I. INTRODUCTION

A. Program Definition:

The Retail Training Program is unique in its approach to serving the needs of the business community. The main concept of this program is to provide on-sight-training for the employees of any area business, regardless of whether it is product or service related. An example of this philosophy is the location of the Retail Training office and classroom in the management offices of the Huntington Mall. This allows the business community to directly relate to the program and vice versa.

The program concentrates on four areas of training: (1) Entry Level, (2) Firstline Supervisory, (3) Management, and (4) Entrepreneural Training and Development.

B. Demographics:

Cabell County is located on the Ohio River in western West Virginia, approximately two hours from Lexington, Kentucky, Cincinnati, and Columbus, Ohio. The Huntington-Cabell County area is the industrial and retail core of the Tri-State Standard Metropolitan Statistical area (city pop.-60,000 and county pop.-104,000). The Tri-State Region is comprised of three states and thirteen counties which total the 22nd largest metropolitan area in the country, approximately 420,000 people.

Our major industry includes: steel, chemical, glass manufacturing, C&O Railroad, International Nickel, and Marshall University.

A 150 store regional mall, 1.2 million sq. feet, is the focal point of the area retail industry. The Cafaro Corporation of Youngstown, Ohio, the nations fifth largest real estate developer, is the owner/manager of this development. I point this fact out because earlier I mentioned my office location. A major factor for the success and acceptance of this program is the cooperative effort between the Cafaro Corporation and the Cabell County Public School System.

In housing the program with the Mall management, both the School System and Cafaro Corporation illustrate to the Mall business tenants our interest in their effort to better serve the community. The Training Coordinator participates in all mall office staff meetings and serves as a liaison between the management and school system. The coordinator's role with the management also includes being an ex-facto member on the Merchants Association. The Merchants Association is the governing board of the Mall which is made up of eleven businesses, the four major department stores and seven elected small businesses.

I have enclosed a job description of the Retail Training Coordinator position which further illustrates the responsibilities of the position.

II. FUNDING SOURCE

A. Development of Grant

In 1980, Dr. Ed Davis, State Supervisor of Marketing Education, (previously Distributive and Cooperative Education) came up with the idea of a pilot project in small business training. Ninety-seven percent of the businesses in West Virginia are classified as small business. He based his idea of this project on a visit to a marketing program in a mall in Fairfax, Virginia and to Adult Basic Education Centers located in other malls. Also, Dr. Davis had initiated an Adult Preparatory Distributive Education program in Retail Merchandise Training the year before in Cabell County. (Note: Dr. Davis is now the National DECA Director in Reston, Virginia.)

The initial funding came through the West Virginia Department of Education's Bureau of Vocational, Technical and Adult Education. Money was earmarked in a special projects fund. A specific grant was written through the Cooperative Education division, assigning the funds to Dr. Davis. He then selected Cabell County as the project site, since a new mall was under construction.

The project was renewed annually from this funding source

for the first five years. This fiscal year, funding was changed to Adult Preparatory funds directly from the Vocational Bureau without any division alignment. However, the New and Expanding Industry division is very interested and would offer support and sponsorship if needed.

What this money provides is:

SALARY...plus all fixed costs
SUPPLIES
EQUIPMENT
TRAVEL

PLEASE NOTE: The Cafaro Corporation (Mall management) provides "in-kind expenses" i.e. office space, telephone, secretarial use, office equipment, office supplies, classroom, etc.

B. Instructor Funding

Monies are also available from Adult Supplemental Class funds given to each county by the State Vocational Bureau. These funds provide for the hiring of instructors on an hourly basis. My current scale for instructors is $9.90 per hour. As coordinator, I request an allotment of hours to use for the classes scheduled. This request is submitted during the current fiscal period for use in the next fiscal year.

Who do I hire? A police officer to conduct a store security/ loss prevention seminar or a management consultant to instruct a workshop in time or stress management, and so on.

III. PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

A. Needs Assessment

The local Chamber of Commerce, U. S. Small Business Administration, Marshall University Management Department, and State Vocational staff participated in helping the county schools develop a questionnaire to determine the kinds of training needed by area business.

B. Curriculum

Once the questionnaires were collected and evaluated, the

four levels of training mentioned in the introduction were developed. Enclosed is a list of seminar topics regularly presented. Workshops are also developed on request to meet a special need of a business. For example: a local restaurant was closed by the County Health Department for arguing over violations during an inspection. I arranged to serve as moderator for a meeting between the manager and health official. Then, we scheduled a workshop for the restaurant employees. From the discussion and presentation came the idea to hold a general session for all other food service establishments in the local trade area (a total of 23). This, hopefully, would avert some of the same problems from occurring in their restaurants in the future.

As far as a "standard curriculum" goes, it does not exist. Materials, information, statistics, data, and packets are compiled from many sources and disseminated based upon the needs of that particular business participating in the workshop. In gathering the curriculum, business consultants, college professors, and other business professionals contribute. This also helps to continuously update the curriculum and keep the information as current as possible.

An articulation agreement between the county school system, Marshall University, and Marshall University Community College further compliments the variety of subjects and programs which can be offered. The agreement helps in defining the roles of each agency so that a duplication of effort does not exist. It also allows for a working arrangement to assist each program. In one case, the Retail Training office interceeded for Marshall University in establishing a Marketing Intern Program. A student intern is placed in the Marketing Director's office for a period of one semester. The on-the-job training provides invaluable experiences plus class credit. Also, the intern earns an income as a paid employee of the office staff.

Each semester the Marshall University Community College has worked through my office to implement off-campus classes in the

mall. Sears has provided classroom space. These classes are part of the requirements for a two year Associate Degree in Marketing or Management. The Retail Training program has worked in conjunction with other agencies as well, including the Small Business Administration, Chamber of Commerce, American Red Cross, County Adult Basic Education Centers, and The Small Business Development Institute (part of the Governor's Office of Economic Development).

C. Training Implementation

Workshops will vary in length from 2 hours to 16 hours. Workshops are conducted seven days a week and are held between the hours of 7 a.m. to 11 p.m. This is due to the necessity of scheduling the workshop at a time which does not conflict with the operation of the business. In some cases, the entire store will attend. So the workshop needs to be scheduled before opening or after closing time. With businesses such as a major department store or wholesale distributor, employees are broken down into small groups of 10 to 15 people over several days.

The number of workshops conducted each month will vary according to the time of year. There are two periods of heavy training and two periods of slack training. The spring quarter between February and May and the fall quarter between September and November are the busiest training times. For example, the workshop totals for September, 1986 reflect the typical heavy trend. A total of eighteen workshops were conducted which involve 313 people. The average number of workshops per month is ten involving 250-300 participants. Even during the slack training periods workshops are offered, but the number is reduced. Summer vacations interfere with the scheduling as well as the December last minute Christmas rush.

The location of the workshop is at the discretion of the business. It can be held either in their store or the mall management classroom (conference room). Many managers like the option of holding the workshop in my classroom, because it

creates a nicer atmosphere with comfortable seating than their store could provide.

Workshops are also scheduled outside the mall area. The program is open to all businesses in the city or county. The Huntington Area Chamber of Commerce publishes a monthly newsletter which provides information on scheduling. I also attend regular meetings of the Chamber for a high visibility approach. The Retail Merchandise Training Coordinator from the County Vocational-Technical Center also attends and makes herself available to assist in workshop scheduling. This type of cooperation between the two programs allows for greater coverage of the business community.

In scheduling workshop/seminar sessions outside my classroom, I have utilized the facilities of several major corporations. Key Centurion Bancshares, Inc., the largest banking institution in West Virginia, has endorsed the program and co-sponsored workshops by providing their conference room. They have also furnished refreshments and donated advertising.

I need to mention one other agency which has been very instrumental in implementing this program. The Regional Education Service Agency (RESA) is a division of the State Department of Education. The area coordinator of this agency works with small business development. The resources available through RESA have assisted this program by providing additional funding for use in hiring guest speakers who cost more than the budget can pay.

D. Evaluation/Followup

Accountability follows traditional education doctrine. Simply, "the numbers game" determines continuation or closing. Each week, I submit a summary of activities to the County Vocational Director, which lists among other things, the number of workshops and number of participants. I also submit monthly VE-10 forms which outline the workshop, instructor, number of participants (male-female), and ethnic groups, for each workshop.

A record is maintained on every individual who participates in the workshop. This type of documentation is valuable to the

individual because it provides a record of attendance. Many participants have utilized this record for resumes and for promotions. The Retail Training Office can supply a letter for the individual documenting this information. Furthermore, each individual is awarded a certificate of participation for each workshop he/she attends.

Followup is also achieved by interviews and feedback for the managers and first-line supervisors. Through their observations and conversations with employees, insight is gained for program development. In some cases, participants are asked to fill out a workshop evaluation form. The forms are then tabulated and critiqued for future reference.

COORDINATOR OF RETAIL TRAINING

1. Conduct and revise as necessary an occupational needs analysis of Retail Training occupations located at the Huntington Mall and related area of Cabell County.

2. Identify the need for and implement Adult Supplemental and/or other Adult Retail Training classes and programs at the Huntington Mall and related area of Cabell County.

3. Develop competency based curriculum for retailing occupations located in the county for the following levels:
   A. Entry level
   B. First-line supervisory
   C. Management
   D. Entrepreneural Training & Development

4. Develop linkage with other area training programs and agencies concerning Retail Training classes and programs at the Huntington Mall.

5. Develop and submit to the appropriate agency or agencies an ongoing proposal to meet the identified needs for Retail Training at the Huntington Mall and related area of Cabell County.

6. Serve as a liaison between the Cabell County Public School System and the merchants and/or Mall management.

7. Serve as a liaison between the Huntington Mall merchants and/or Mall management and the school system's Cooperative Education programs and Adult Retailing program by assisting with placement and on-the-job training.

8. Develop and maintain a public awareness program for customers, merchants, and the management of the Huntington Mall concerning Vocational and Adult Education programs available within the county school system.

9. Shall be responsible for appropriate data gathering for Retail Training programs operating at the Huntington Mall and related area of Cabell County (i.e. Student enrollment, store participation, certificates of completion, class schedules, instructors, payroll, report forms, etc.).

10. Carry out any other job-related assignments made by the County Director of Vocational, Technical, and Adult Education.

RETAIL TRAINING OFFICE

Huntington Mall

733 - 0492

Robert E. McClain

Coordinator

SEMINAR TOPICS

FUNDAMENTALS OF SUPERVISION
PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT
ENTREPRENEURAL DEVELOPMENT
STRESS MANAGEMENT
TIME MANAGEMENT
IMAGE/CUSTOMER RELATIONS
SALES EFFECTIVENESS TRAINING
ADVERTISING FOR THE SMALL BUSINESS
EMPLOYEE MOTIVATION
INTERVIEWING TECHNIQUES FOR THE MANAGER
EXECUTIVE DECISION MAKING
SITUATIONAL LEADERSHIP
EMPLOYMENT DISCRIMINATION/SEXUAL HARASSMENT
WELLNESS AT THE WORKSITE
LOSS PREVENTION/SHOPLIFTING/INTERNAL THIEF
CREDIT CARD FRAUD
BAD CHECK IDENTIFICATION
COUNTERFEITING AND DETERRENCE
PRODUCT KNOWLEDGE
SMALL BUSINESS OPERATIONS
FINANCIAL RECORDKEEPING FOR A SMALL BUSINESS
STARTING AND MANAGING A SMALL BUSINESS
CPR/FIRST AID
WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION